



A Public Entity Reuse Program

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Our Mission



Ensure responsible reuse and renewal of

- Water,
- Solid waste, and
- Energy

to support the health and resiliency of our communities.

Where we started



Lyell Brand of the United Northern Sportsmen
examining sludge in the St. Louis River



Our History

1971 – Minnesota State Legislature creates Western Lake Superior Sanitary District

1972 – Clean Water Act

1973 – Oil Embargo

1974 – Solid Waste Authority and groundbreaking

1978 – Opened our doors



WLSSD Groundbreaking (1974)

Water Resource Recovery

- 13 billion gallons of clean water
- 13 million kWh clean energy
- 530 square miles
- 75 miles of pipes
- 16 communities
- 4 major industries



Solid Waste Facilities

Regional Solid Waste
Transfer Station



Materials Recovery Center



Yard Waste Compost Site



Household Hazardous
Waste Facility



Background

- Residents wanted a place to bring 'stuff' when the Rice Lake Regional Landfill closed
- Goal: Meet the public's need while separating more recyclable and reusable materials from the waste stream; cover the cost on recyclable and reusable materials
- The Materials Recovery Center (MRC) opened January 2002, fully operational as designed by July 2002



Purpose

- Divert materials from the landfill
- Reuse, Repurpose, and Recycle!
- Have Positive Outcomes
 - Save money
 - Adjust attitudes toward 'trash'
 - Reduce impacts on our environment for future generations



Operations

- Customer arrives with unwanted items
- Staff assesses load for acceptable and unacceptable waste, including reusable items
- Customer brings assessment form to cashier and pays for the waste
- Customer drops off items at designated stops



Resource Renew's Materials Recovery Center



MRC Reuse Area (circa 2002)

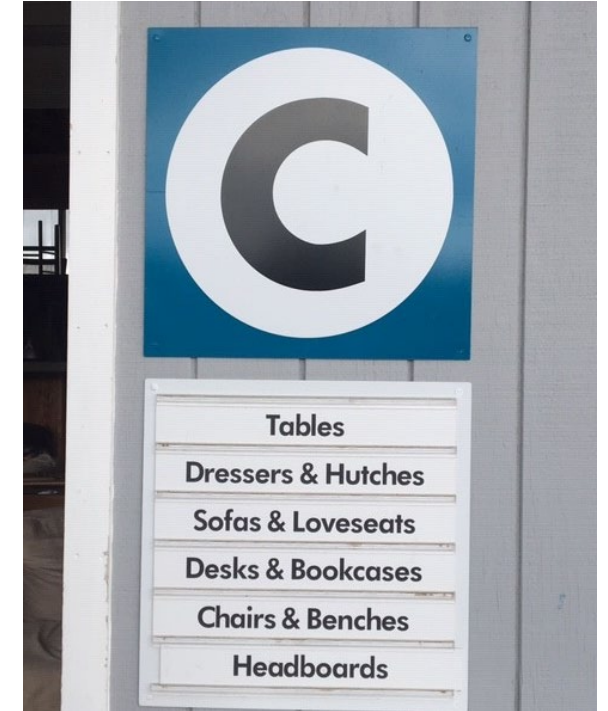
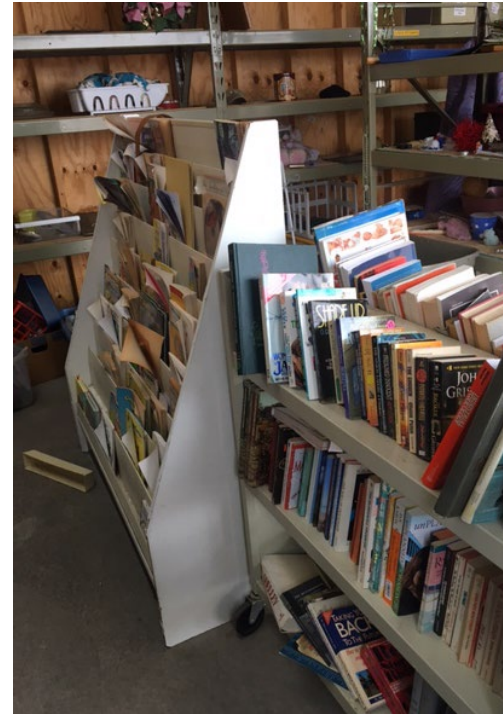


MRC Reuse Area (circa 2016)



Improvements in the last decade

- Constructed Garage C
- Installed overhead doors in shipping containers
- Painted all buildings
- Added signs & shelving
- Paved and marked drop-off zone
 - Better surface for unloading/loading in front of reuse buildings
 - Less dust, mud and potholes mean less items to go to waste boxes later
- Added dollies and lifts
- Added wagons at the Hill



What is different at our public Reuse Area?

It is NOT a store

- Staff wears Personal Protective Equipment associated with a construction zone
 - Hard hat
 - Safety glasses
 - Class 3 vest/jacket
 - Gloves (when picking anything up)
 - Steel-toed boots
- Heavy equipment moves around & alongside residential vehicles
- Open air site, active transfer station



Reuse...Why charge to drop off reuse items?

- Covers the costs of items that are not reclaimed and eventually require disposal
- Covers some costs associated with reuse
 - Extra staff
 - Building construction and maintenance
 - Data tracking (receipt system, etc)
 - Printed Liability Waivers
- FREE shopping
 - We don't have a way to check out while leaving – payment is on the way in

Metal items can be reused or scrapped

- Bikes
- Automotive/mechanical parts
- Barrels, buckets
- Buckets
- Rims
- Beams
- Instruments
- Tanks (emptied and crushed)
- Blades
- Mowers, Snow blowers
- Tools, nails, screws
- Fencing, posts, railing
- Grills, pots, pans*, utensils
- Cast iron items: dishware, tubs, sinks



* Consider PFAS in non-stick coatings

Staff decides what goes in Reuse Area

- Reusable items in good condition (and some that need work to repair)
- Popular use salvage materials
- Do-It-Yourself (DIY) project parts
 - Clean lumber, pipes
 - Tools, nails, screws
- Architectural and antique items
- Materials needed by partner nonprofits



Unacceptable reuse items

- Infant/child car seats and cribs
- Bike helmets
- Items with personal or private information
 - ID numbers, family photos, addresses, etc....
- X-rated movies, adult magazines or books
- Hazardous items*



- Consumable foods or beverages
- Prescription drugs/over the counter medication
- Tobacco, liquor, ammunition, firearms, etc.
- Appliances, Electronics, Tires



How the MRC Reuse Area works

Every customer must sign a Liability Waiver

- 5 Golden Reuse Rules

- Park in designated areas
- 2-item limit
- 15-minute visiting time
- Children must be under close supervision
- Customers may not approach other customers' vehicles for reuse items



Other General MRC Rules important in the Reuse Area

- No smoking or vaping
- Pets must remain in vehicles

What counts as 1 item?

- 1 large item – e.g. lawn mower, bedframe, wheelbarrow
- A matching set
- A project's worth of material
- 5 or more high volume items
 - Books
 - DVDs, CDs, VHS tapes
 - Small toys
 - Mugs
 - Planters & pots



Reuse Challenges & Successes

Challenges

- Usable items that no one wants
 - Pianos
 - Sinks and toilets
- Limited display space (& storage) for good items



Challenges

- Balancing importance of MRC disposal & recycle operations with reuse
 - Traffic
 - Customer time in Reuse Area

(~30% shop after bringing items to dispose or recycle)

Live Feed:

Use our real-time video feed to see if there is a line and plan your visit. Refreshes every 15 sec.



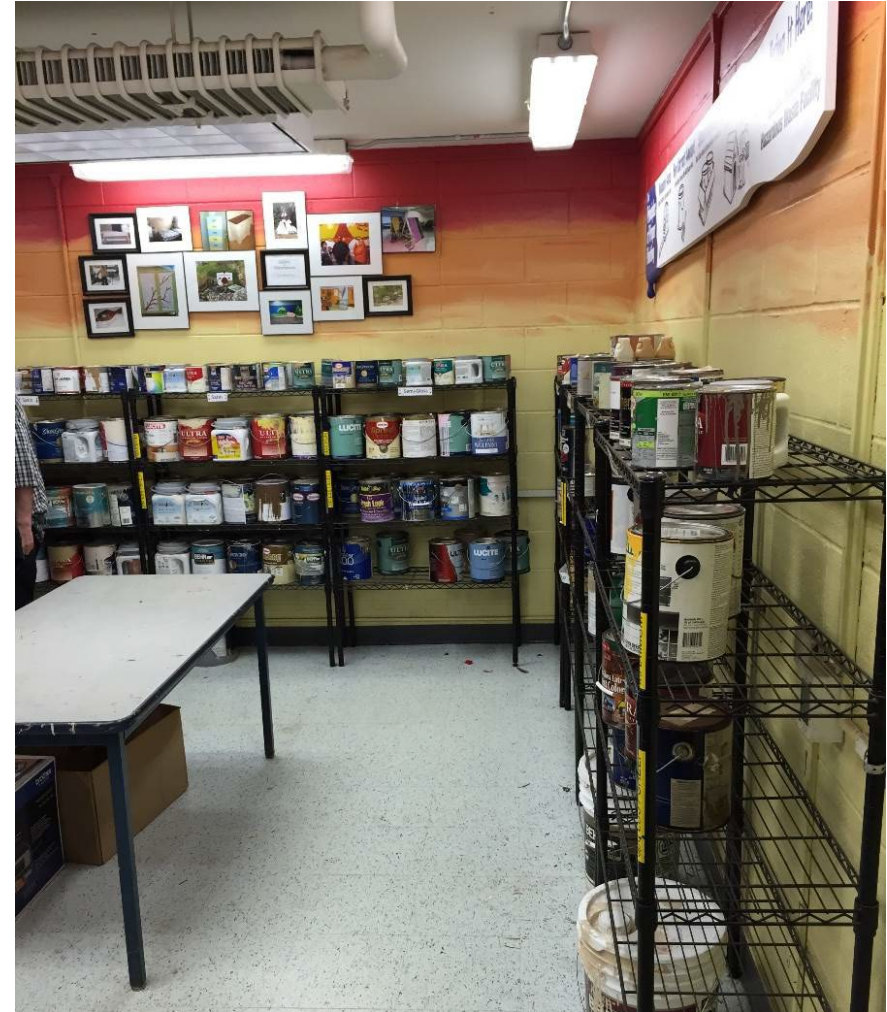
Successes

- Resolved dark shopping spaces
 - Cut out the sides of shipping containers and installed overhead garage doors
 - Installed clear overhead panels or upper back wall panels in the buildings
 - Made outside shopping spaces for items that do not need protection from the weather



Successes

- More Reuse Area concepts in the procedure manual
 - Better training for new staff
 - Good go-to for current staff
- Public engagement
 - Social media
 - Events, booths, tours
 - Cross promotion with Household Hazardous Waste Facility's Product Reuse Center



Successes

- 'Selling' our items
 - Purposeful placement both in and out of buildings and shipping containers
 - Labeled buildings, containers, and inside shelves
- 200-300 Tons kept out of the landfill annually





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